

**JFS Planning Committee**  
**November 25, 2025 @ 9:00 a.m.**  
**CCDJFS Community Room**

Members Present: Tom Andrews, Chaney Nezbeth, Roger Sikorszky, Kimberly Steele, Steve Ullom, James Ford, Lori Colian, Mary Ann Kochalko, Tracy Smith

Guests: Courtney Amendola, Allison Zepernick, Sheila Coontz

**Meeting Called to Order/ Quorum Established**

Chaney welcomed members and called the meeting to order; quorum was established.

**Approval of Minutes**

There were no additions, subtractions, or corrections. James motioned to approve September minutes; Tom seconded. Motion carries.

**Adoption of Agenda**

There were no corrections, additions or deletions to the agenda. Marie motioned to adopt agenda; Lori seconded. Agenda adopted.

**Introduction of Guests**

Allison Zepernick: Director of Youth Coalition with Family Recovery Center introduced herself as a representative for Jim Stitt. Sheila Coontz: Business Office Administrator with Job and Family Services stood in as a representative for Rachel Ketterman in the event there were questions regarding the contract monitoring report.

**Reports**

**a. Ohio Means Jobs – Mary Ann**

Since July, OMJ has recorded 4,943 visits (82% in person, 18% virtual), serving nearly 3,000 job seekers. Many clients come in for unemployment-related issues and required in-person assessments, which explains the higher number of on-site visits despite ongoing transportation challenges. Funding under the Continuing Resolution remains stable.

**b. CCDJFS TANF Program Reports – Courtney**

SNAP recipient numbers have fluctuated but remain stable overall. Publicly Funded Child Care has increased due to recent eligibility changes; participation is expected to rise further as schools resume. Medicaid approvals increased in July. TANF compliance remains above 95%; the state continues to monitor SNAP more closely than TANF. Medicaid timeliness percentages remain lower due to staffing challenges.

PCSA and NET activity varies based on service needs and requests during the reporting period. Highest PRC assistance for the quarter was the Shoe Program; a lot of money was used which was the reason funding was halted.

Adult Protective Services received 36 referrals in July, 36 in August, and 34 in September. The number of investigations decreased then increased, with 17 in July, 11 in August, and 13

in September. Of all investigations conducted, 12 involved neglect, 11 involved self-neglect, 14 involved exploitation, and 3 involved physical or emotional abuse. At the end of September, there were 18 open and active cases and a total of 45 guardianships.

James asked if all SNAP recipients have been made whole following the shutdown; they have not. Complex cases remain unresolved at the state level, and counties cannot take further action. Clients are being advised that the state is working on a resolution. Some clients received partial benefits, while others did not. Overpayment issues are also being addressed.

A food drive was permitted, with donations going to CAA's Food Pantry. James reported that some pre-shutdown policy changes are now in effect. Utility payments may be countable depending on circumstances, and money received from family to help with bills is considered income. ABAWD age requirements now extend to 18 – 64, with limited exemptions. Ages 61 – 64 population have raised expectations to work off assistance. System updates are expected in February, and full work requirements are delayed for approximately one year.

**c. Annual Contract Monitoring Report – Rachel**

Report was emailed to members prior to meeting. Members thought it was nice to see it laid out in that format.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

**a. New Terms of Membership**

The following terms are ending December 2025:

1. Pastor Brian Brown – Lisbon Nazarene Church
2. Lori Colian – Columbiana County Mental Health Recovery Services Board
3. Roger Sikorszky – Columbiana County Counseling Center
4. Tracy Smith – CCDJFS, AFSCME Union Rep
5. Kimberly Steele – Kent State University - Salem

Brian was not in attendance. Lori, Roger, Tracy, and Kim all agreed to another 3-year term ending December 2028. Motion to renominate – Tom motioned; James seconded. Motion carries.

**b. Nominating Committee**

A new Vice Chair is needed. Rachel and Tom serve as the nominating committee. Interest was requested from members.

The next meeting is February 24 and will be Chaney's final meeting as Chair; Lori will assume the role in May. Steve is no longer eligible to serve as chair due to JFS becoming the

administrative agent for FCFC. A couple potential candidates were discussed. Tom and Rachel will review the list of candidates and provide a recommendation at the February meeting.

### **Members' Comments**

Allison shared that a new Clinical Director has been in place since August. Significant efforts have been made to strengthen clinical operations. She noted the director is detail-oriented, dedicating extensive time to improving sustainability and accountability within services.

Tom reported that multiple organizations in Lisbon partnered for the second year to distribute Christmas assistance through the Lions Club. Using block grant funds, 348 Save A Lot vouchers were distributed in one day, totaling \$10,000 and significantly reducing food pantry inventory. Due to current need, an additional voucher distribution may take place in December, potentially focused on meat purchases. Vouchers allow clients flexibility based on dietary needs and transportation limitations.

Tom also shared that proceeds from the annual golf outing support the food pantry. He noted the broader impact of the Community Action Agency shutdown across the county and state, including Head Start and Early Head Start program closures and staff layoffs. Some programs in Ohio were forced to lay off significant numbers of employees but are now receiving funding and beginning to reopen. Locally, funding remains in place through June.

Lori shared that her CFO has officially submitted a letter of resignation after 55 years of service. She noted that there are upcoming fiscal opportunities for anyone interested.

Steve shared a case involving a family referred through crisis services under ICE requirements. The father was being deported, while the mother and three children are U.S. citizens and had no household income. The family ultimately decided to leave the county with the father.

Roger reported that Continue Care grants are being reduced by two-thirds, effective March. This impacts the three Mahoning County grants focused on permanent placements rather than transitions. Efforts are underway to manage existing resources and plan for increased homelessness. He noted progress in filling youth programs despite staff departures and expressed hope for stabilization in the future.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

**The next JFS Planning Committee meeting will be held February 24, 2026, at 9 a.m. @ JFS**